

# Milford Board of Education

## Meeting Minutes

### Regular Business Meeting

#### June 8, 2009

#### **Board members present:**

David Amendola  
Tracy Casey  
David Hourigan, Board Chair  
Cindy Kopazna  
Jim Quish  
Joanne Rohrig, Minority Leader  
Jim Santa Barbara  
Pamela Staneski  
Greta Stanford, Majority Leader  
David Steinlauf

#### **Administrators present:**

Harvey Polansky, Superintendent  
Philip Russell, Deputy Superintendent  
Wendy Kopazna, Dir. of Human Resources  
Susan Kelleher, Dir. of Pupil Personnel Services

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Milford Board of Education held its regular business meeting on Monday, June 8, in the Board of Education Meeting Room in the Parsons Complex. Board Chair David Hourigan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

## **II. STUDENT/STAFF RECOGNITION**

Dr. Harvey Polansky and Board Chair David Hourigan started the meeting with recognition of several students and staff members for their recent good work. Recognitions included:

### **Meadowside Mentoring Program**

Dr. Polansky offered congratulations to Ms. Celine Sandor, two of her students and five residents at the Milford Senior Center for their participation in a mentoring program. The seniors visit Ms. Sandor's classroom once a week to mentor students. They work on a variety of services from building social skills to writing and project work. Recognized were:

Andrew Smith	5 <sup>th</sup> grade student representative
Sara Beck	5 <sup>th</sup> grade student representative
Barbara Burrows	Milford Senior Center participant
Ann Volderaue	Milford Senior Center participant
Mickey Johnson	Milford Senior Center participant
Celine Sandor	5 <sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Meadowside Elementary School

### **Foran Journalism**

Dr. Polansky then recognized Mr. Dan Young who is a journalism teacher along with two student representatives, Lindsay Ancel and Gina Sirico for their work on the "Foran Exchange." The Exchange is an informational vehicle for instruction.

### **Jonathan Law Baseball Team**

Having won the "Class L State Championship" last year, Law has really marked itself as a power. Dr. Polansky then recognized the following:

John Hermanson	Captain
Mike Doran	Captain
Frank Peloso	Captain
Mike Nelson	Captain
Bob Riordan	Assistant Coach
Ed Shea	Assistant Coach

J P Peloso	Assistant Coach
Joe Rohrig	Assistant Coach
Greg Simler	Assistant Coach
Dennis Sweeney	Head Coach

### **Student Liaisons**

Dr. Polansky then recognized the outgoing student liaisons for the invaluable service to their schools and the community at large. He explained the liaison role reports out at every board meeting ensuring the board and public are kept up to date on school activities. Dr. Polansky also welcomed the incoming liaisons for the 2009-10 school year. Recognized were:

Jonathan Law	2008-09	William Bradford and Brittany Maher
Joseph A. Foran	2008-09	Nichole Geoffrion and Dan Worroll
Jonathan Law	2009-10	Bing Zheng and Bryce Delgrande
Joseph A. Foran	2009-10	Shenali Parikh and Dylan Leonard

### **Staff Recognition**

Phil Russell, Deputy Superintendent of Operations was named a co-recipient of the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials *2009 Celebrated School Business Official Award*. For the past nine years, Mr. Russell has served as the chief financial and operational officer for the Milford Public Schools. He was instrumental in the purchase and implementation of a new financial computer software system which revolutionized the manner in which business is conducted throughout the district.

In addition to his outstanding achievements in the workplace, Mr. Russell is an active volunteer in the community. He created the Chelsea Foundation, an organization that provides free medical equipment to needy individuals after donating a kidney to his daughter many years ago. The foundation now operates in six states and has helped thousands of people.

## **III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

- a) Greta Stanford made a motion to accept the May 11, 2009 meeting minutes as approved. Joanne Rohrig seconded. With the noted change (adding Mr. Santa Barbara distributed his liaison report to the board), the motion passed unanimously.
- b) Greta Stanford made a motion to accept the May 26, 2009 meeting minutes as approved. Joanne Rohrig seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. J. Czaplicki of 396 Anderson Avenue told the board she supported the media aides and was delighted to know the board had restored most of them.

Mrs. C. Berni of 96 Centennial Drive thanked Mr. Madancy for hosting the young athletes program at Orange Avenue. She attended a ceremony recently and it was great. She is concerned about the budget cuts to the textbooks. She questioned why the athletics account was not touched.

Ms. R. Borer of 240 Anderson Avenue thanked the board for restoring the media aide positions. She said she understands it was a very difficult budget process; however, it was the right thing to do.

Ms. M. Tynan said she had sent a board member an email about the strings program being eliminated at the middle schools. However, her feelings have changed since sending the email. She has been told that the program has been reinstated.

Ms. Katherine Candido of 1015 New Haven Avenue asked the board to restore all media aide positions.

Ms. K. Huber 277 Roses Mill Road reported the PTA Council board will remain the same next year. She thanked Mr. Santa Barbara for his attendance and participation at the meetings over the past year. She continued by saying that one very important goal for the upcoming year will be to keep communication lines open. As a parent, she said communication is vital and the environment is a key piece of learning. East Shore projects need to continue as do the high school renovation projects. She also congratulated Eleane Kazinski who has been named the 2009 Parent of the Year. She is a parent from East Shore Middle School.

## **V. CHAIR's REPORT**

Board Chair David Hourigan called for the Liaison Reports.

Mr. Santa Barbara submitted his liaison report to the board.

Mrs. Staneski reported the Milford Prevention Council has received two small grants. The grants were received from both United Way and New England Regional Council. This will help the schools and the community with children who are at risk of substance abuse.

Chair Hourigan announced the MASA contract negotiations will commence on June 29. He then named Mrs. Rohrig, Mrs. Stanford and Mrs. Casey as the board representatives for the negotiations.

Chair Hourigan updated the board on his recent discussions with the mayor and the Board of Aldermen pertaining to the Jonathan Law High School renovations. He has been told the projects will move forward. The mayor had indicated he will support the project if the Board of Aldermen does. The aldermen will meet later in the month to make a decision on the bond ordinance. He encouraged board members to seek the support of the aldermen.

Mrs. Staneski asked about the shovel ready stimulus money. She was told the state has not responded on the project reform or East Shore Middle School. Dr. Polansky told her that the school projects are not eligible for the shovel ready stimulus money. It is still not clear on how the stimulus money is to be spent. The interpretation of the Federal Government and the State are not in alignment.

Mr. Steinlauf explained how important it is to move forward with the bonding project at the high school. While we do not want to spend money, it is advantageous to bond the projects now because it will cost the city way more money if we wait for a few years. Chair Hourigan said that project went out to bid at 4.1 million and came in at 3.3 million.

Chair Hourigan announced a petition is circulating regarding support of the Family Resource Center. Governor Rell cut the funding for the program out of the budget. He then gave a background of the services provided by the Family Resource Center and encouraged the public to sign the petition if they were in agreement that the program should continue.

Chair Hourigan then delivered a prepared statement which explained the budget process which began with a 3.49% increase bringing the total to over \$84M. The board then requested a decrease of 1% making the new total \$83,863,950. The BOF reduced it to 1.49% or \$83,460,000. The BOA then reduced it by 1.35% over the current operating dollars bringing the total to 82,929,000.

Chair Hourigan then reported that on May 29<sup>th</sup>, IDEA funds were made available to the district. The funds will be used to offset the budgetary implications in the amount of \$449,000. He also informed the public of his recent discussions with the six unions regarding concessions. All unions declined to open the contracts for salary concessions. He noted a recent article in the newspaper that claimed the paraprofessional union had agreed to the concession. The article was incorrect. He then said the budget will be voted later in the meeting.

## **VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **1. Student Reports.**

Nicole Geoffrion reported on the latest activity and upcoming events occurring at Joseph A. Foran High School. Brittany Maher and William Bradford presented the report for Jonathan Law High School. Both reports are on file.

## **2. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Polansky updated the board on a new committee that has been put in place at East Shore. This committee, named the Beautification Committee, will be responsible for adding beautification at East Shore by painting, landscaping, adding curtains etc.

He then reminded the board of the upcoming end of the year ceremonies and graduations.

## **3. Instructional Report**

Mr. Cummings told the board the strings program will stay intact at the middle school level. It will be a scheduled course without a pullout. This was done without adding any new staff. Teachers came forward with their concerns and offered a feasible proposal.

Mrs. Staneski asked if there is a plan for the strings program at the high school level. It doesn't seem to be effective to offer the program at the middle school level if you do not offer it at the high school level.

Mr. Cummings told the board the elementary class size will increase due to the addition of the program at the middle school. However, a proposal was made by the teachers who actively wanted to keep the program.

Mrs. Staneski asked for the number of participants by grade level for planning purposes for next year's budget.

Mrs. Casey thanked administration for their work in keeping the program. She felt the students were notified of the cancellation with very short notice.

### **Response to Intervention**

Mr. Cummings began by thanking the staff at Orange Avenue for their perseverance and commitment to piloting the program. RTI is a framework for providing tiered instructional services and for identifying students with learning disabilities. The State will implement the program July, 2009. Mr. Cummings then turned the meeting over to Mr. Madancy to report on the RTI pilot at Orange Avenue.

Mr. Madancy thanked his staff for their very hard work. He then shared PowerPoint that outlined the successes, challenges and next steps of the program. Mr. Madancy thanked the staff again for making a paradigm shift to Response to Intervention. He said the consistent schedule helped the staff follow the program. The data collected will take approximately two to three years to see the patterns and trends. However, he noted the early indications on the kindergarten screenings are positive.

## **4. Operational Report**

### **a) Personnel Report**

Mrs. W. Kopazna, Director of Human Resources, presented the report for May. She is currently working on teacher requests and transfers. She also reported the offer letters are on hold pending approval of the budget. She hopes to send offers by the week's end.

The board asked for clarification of some positions including grant positions, IDEA funded positions and Special Education.

Mrs. Casey requested to modify the personnel report to show which positions were to be funded by the stimulus money.

### **b) Budget Report for May**

Mr. Russell presented the Budget Performance Report for May, as well as the Cash Disbursements Report. 99.5% of the budget has been spent. Eight teachers have announced retirement to date.

### **c) Budget Transfers**

Mr. Russell presented the budget transfers to the board. A request of \$137,000 to be transferred is being presented for approval. There should most likely be another set of transfers at the July meeting because there is not another meeting in June, and there is the possibility of more retirements submitted before June 30.

Mrs. Kopazna called for a point of order. She believed all budget transfers are to be done by June 30. She challenged the date given for budget transfers. She referred to an audit report that cited the Board of Education for not completed its transfers by June 30. Mr. Amendola agreed.

Mr. Russell told the board a transfer after June 30 should be fine as long as it is not a very big amount.

Mr. Amendola requested the audit report be forwarded to the chair.

**d) Summer Projects**

Mr. Bradbury provided a report of the summer projects to the board (on file). All projects should be complete by the end of the summer. He noted the projects have been budgeted either in the 2008-09 or the 2009-10 budget.

**e) Healthy Food Certification**

Mrs. Faustich reported every year the board needs to approve not participating in the Healthy Foods Program. A nutritional program which enables the Food Services (self funded) department to earn .10 for every meal sold. This year, the State may reduce the earnings to .05 per meal. She also noted it does not affect the Milford Public Schools budget, but the Food Services. She further stated that last year a survey was done pertaining to how the clubs and other activity groups would be impacted if the district participates in the program. The negative outweighed the participation. She also added that the school lunches and breakfasts already comply with the nutritional guidelines.

Mr. Quish asked for clarification on the program and how students would be able to fundraise. His understanding is the fundraisers could occur and long as there was not a transaction from person to person. He believes \$40,000 to \$60,000 is a lot of money. Mrs. Faustich told him that some of that money would go to purchasing food that complied with the program. She also said that the middle and high schools offer fundraising throughout the day. Those students would be impacted significantly because they would not be able to fundraise.

Mr. Steinlauf asked if there was a way to hold the lunch prices by participating in the program and was told no.

Dr. Polansky also noted some districts supplement their school district. Board money goes toward the school lunch program. The program in Milford is self funded.

The board recessed at 8:52 p.m.

The board reconvened at 9:03 p.m.

## **VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Santa Barbara requested Item b-Budget Transfers be moved to New Business.

Greta Stanford made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented with the exception of Item b-Budget Transfers. Joanne Rohrig seconded. The Consent agenda included:

- Voucher list disbursements, May 2009
- Use of Facilities, Cornerstone Christian Center to use Jonathan Law High School auditorium.
- Healthy Food Certification Program, to not participate in the program as listed in CGS 10-215f.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **VIII. ACTION ITEMS**

**Unfinished Business.** Approval of the 2009-10 Budget Board of Education Operating Budget Re-Allocation Plan.

Chair Hourigan told the public the elected officials of the board has always put "kids first". Tonight, he will present a reallocation plan that came out of the Democratic caucus. He presented the changes below in totality and then opened the floor up for discussion before voting.

The total cuts from the BOF(\$817,950) and the BOA(\$117,000) total \$934,950. In administration's presentation to the board on May 26, it was recommended that \$445, 048 would come from an IDEA grant and that the following accounts would be reduced accordingly:

Cert. Teachers:	\$96,000
Contracted services:	\$30,000
Oil:	\$20,000
Printing:	\$10,000
Textbooks:	\$40,000
Equipment:	\$45,902
Furniture:	\$15,000
Computers:	\$172,000
Capital equipment:	\$11,000
Professional development:	\$50,000
<b>Total :</b>	<b>\$934,950</b>

### Outcome of the Democratic Caucus

The Democratic caucus wants to restore two media aides so that each middle school will have a media aide and the high schools will each have two. Note: This will decrease the above total by approximately \$50, 000.

In addition, they request to restore the two kindergarten teachers. It is the board's feeling that these positions will be needed once the traditional summer enrollment of kindergarten students occurs. Traditionally, an average of 33 students enroll for kindergarten during the summer. Note: This will decrease the above total by \$96,000.

In order to make up for this approximate \$146,000 deficit, the following recommendations are being made:

Object 1119: Coaches/advisors stipends	
Eliminate one assistant baseball coach at each high school:	\$5598
Eliminate one assistant football coach at each high school:	\$7316
Object 1111: Homebound	\$20,000
Object 1127: Overtime	\$10,000
Object 3232: Professional Evaluations	\$5,000
Object 4103: Fuel Oil	\$10,000
Object 4300: Repairs to grounds	\$3804
Object 4303: Restorative Maintenance	\$20,000
Object 4305: Grounds projects	\$7500
Object 5801: Travel mileage	\$6525
Object 6150: Middle school graduations	\$3600
Object 6150: Academy graduation	\$500
Object 6410: Textbooks (an additional cut to the \$40,000 listed above)	\$10,000
Object 6421: Periodicals	\$7500
Object 7340: Furniture (an additional cut to the \$15,000 listed above)	\$5000
Object 7392: Capital Equipment	\$35,000
<b>Total additional cuts:</b>	<b>\$146,343</b>

Chair Hourigan further said that it is recognized that the \$146,000 total and the \$146,343 total are not identical. When the exact numbers are known, restore any savings to object 4300, Repairs to Grounds.

Mrs. Kopazna asked for an explanation for the decrease of \$10,000 in the homebound account. Dr. Polansky stated that the account swings from year to year. The hope is that the board "made the right call" with respect to decreasing the amount of \$10,000.

She then asked why the board would feel the need to add the two teachers after administration has already projected that there will not be the need for them. Chair Hourigan told her that after looking at the summer enrollment numbers over the past four years, the teachers would be needed. However, if the kindergarten enrollment prediction is not correct, there would be a reduction in force.

Mrs. Staneski has trouble with any reduction in the media aides. The NEASC report gave Foran a glowing recommendation in respect to the media aides. She questioned what services will need to be redirected with the loss of one aide at each high school.

There was discussion about restoring the final two media aides. Therefore, no media aides would be cut. Mrs. Kopazna and Mrs. Staneski were very strong in this request.

Mrs. Casey suggested the elimination of any non-union raises in order to find funds to add those media aides back into the budget.

Mr. Amendola suggested taking some money from the computers to add the positions back.

Dr. Polansky suggested taking \$30,000 from the Harborside wall project.

After a brief discussion by the board, it was decided to add the final two media aide positions back.

Defray Harborside wall project (4305)	\$30,000
Less 1% for non-union raises (1130)	\$17,000
Building & Grounds (4300)	\$ 2,058

Mrs. Stanford stated that the board has come up with solutions that are right for the kids.

Mrs. Stanford made a motion to approve the 2009-10 Budget Re-Allocation plan as amended. Mrs. Rohrig seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **New Business.**

Mr. Santa Barbara asked for a description of the 3232 Professional Evaluation.

He was told that the account is for student psychiatric evaluation that the district was able to conduct in house. It is difficult to predict the type of issues that will occur during the year. This year, the staff were able to conduct evaluations in-house.

### **IX. BOARD COMMENT**

Mrs. Staneski congratulated Mrs. Santa Barbara for being named Calf Pen Meadow's Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Santa Barbara reported that he and Mrs. Stanford attended a Unified Sports Closing Ceremonies at Orange Avenue of May 30. The program is run by volunteers and is funded by grants. He congratulated Mr. Madancy and the children of Orange Avenue School.

Mrs. Stanford too congratulated Mr. Madancy for hosting the Unified Sports Program.

Mr. Hourigan concluded the meeting by thanking the board for their support of budget. It has been a very difficult process.

### **X. ADJOURN**

Greta Stanford made a motion to adjourn. Joanne Rohrig seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.